



State of California
Respiratory Care Board
444 North 3rd Street, Suite 270
Sacramento, CA 95814
Telephone (916) 323-9983
Fax (916) 323-9999
www.rcb.ca.gov



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Inquiry: I am a Registered Nurse, duly licensed to practice in the State of California. I would like to solicit your most kind advise regarding the practice of Respiratory care-RNs on some home care facilities.

Can a regular registered nurse work as a respiratory care RNs in lieu of respiratory therapist? If so, are Registered RTs allowed to train Nurses for this practice in a home care facility setting? Under Article 6 (3765 d) of the Chapter, paramedics who underwent "formal training" are allowed to practice RT; what do you consider a formal training? Where can I get proper guidelines about the scope of practice and responsibilities of Respiratory Care-RNs?

Response: The Board has reviewed your inquiry and has the following comment:

As a registered nurse, licensed to practice in the State of California, your scope does allow for overlapping functions between other licensed professional such as respiratory care practitioners. As such, duties and skills that may be performed would require appropriate training and competency assessment just as you would need to complete for any specialized skill performed in nursing (lab draws, PIC lines, etc.) This training and assessment should be conducted by a licensed practitioner who practices these skills on a day-to-day basis or by an instructor of an approved respiratory therapy school.

Where indicated by legislative statute, an RN trained to perform certain skills of respiratory care does not meet the legislative requirement to have a licensed respiratory care practitioner available for services unless the RN also holds a current license to practice as a respiratory care practitioner in California.

With regards to your question about proper guidelines for the scope of practice and responsibilities of Respiratory Care – RN's, there is no licensure or clinical designation defined in the California legislature for this type of care provider. Because of that, we are unable to offer any definitive guidelines you might be able to use as a guideline.

Thank you for your inquiry. Should you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Executive Officer of the Respiratory Care Board.

Reference #: 2004-C-32